

Graduate Student Association (GSA) Officers & PhD Student Liaisons 2023-2024

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Welcome & Tips for First Year PhD Students

Dear First Year PhD Student,
Congratulations on officially starting your PhD! TJU's GSA would like to welcome you into your first year of your PhD. As GSA's VP of Internal Affairs AY23-24, I am responsible for coordinating your liaisons and events for you to meet with them outside of your one-on-one meetings. If you have any questions or concerns, please email me at Bridget.Boyle@students.jefferson.edu.

Some tips for your first year:

- Reach out to your designated liaisons for help in navigating academics, student life as a PhD candidate, and opportunities for fun on & off campus.
- There are tutors available for GC550; do not be afraid to use this resource.
- Rotations help you determine what lab is right for you. Lab fit is just as important as liking the work that the PI's lab focuses on and your thesis work. Make sure to really enjoy the people in your lab as you will be spending the majority of time with them over the next few years. Make sure that your work schedule fits with that of the lab or that the lab is willing to accommodate your hours if needed.
- Have honest conversations with your PI about things both lab and outside-of-lab related; it helps to have open communication between the both of you. Remember your PI is not a mind reader.
- PhD is not stress free. Develop stress-relieving strategies that work for you. Make sure to make time for yourself. You will grow a lot in the years to come. As a resource you should use the student counseling center <https://www.jefferson.edu/life-at-jefferson/health-wellness/counseling-center.html>.
- Ask questions, lots and lots of questions. Navigating through your PhD should not be ambiguous. Need answers? Just ask. Not sure who to ask? Ask your liaison!
- I personally found this Nature article very helpful.
 - Twenty things I wish I'd known when I started my PhD: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-018-07332-x>
- Need more advice? Feel free to email and ask questions to your liaisons, or any senior student.
- And, remember to have fun! On that note, GSA hosts a bunch of events during the year for you – stay tuned!

See you soon!

Graduate Student Association (GSA)

*Be sure to follow
@GSAJefferson on Instagram
and Twitter! Find links to all our
social media here! →*



GSA Officers



Nathan Ryan

President, (PhD)

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I'm a 4th year PhD student in the IMP program. I grew up in Vienna, VA, got my BA in Biology at the University of Delaware and my MS in Immunology at Jefferson. I'm currently in David Abraham's lab studying parasite immunology and vaccine development. We're developing a vaccine against the parasitic nematode that causes river blindness, *Onchocerca volvulus*. Outside of work, I like to eat at Philly's great restaurants and explore different neighborhoods and parks.



Bernadette Tiberi

Secretary, (PhD)

Bernadette.Tiberi@students.jefferson.edu

Bern Tiberi is a second-year Ph.D. student in the Genetics, Genomics, & Cancer Biology program at Jefferson. She grew up in Haddon Township, New Jersey, and did her undergraduate studies at the University of New Haven in Forensic Science and Cell & Molecular Biology. She also worked as a research technician for a year at a bio-pharmaceutical company researching PROTACs for cancer therapies. She is currently in Dr. Sara Meyer's lab researching the role of epigenetic modifiers in hematopoiesis and potential hematopoietic malignancies. Outside of science, she likes reading, hanging out with friends and family, traveling, and going to concerts!



Annie Londregan

Senior Vice President, (PhD)

anne.londregan@students.jefferson.edu

Annie Londregan is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Biochemistry and Molecular Pharmacology program at Jefferson. She grew up in Mount Laurel, New Jersey and did her undergraduate studies at Boston University, graduating with a degree in Biochemistry/Molecular Biology. She is currently in the Waldman lab studying the gut-brain axis, specifically the role of neuropod GUCY2C in visceral pain. Outside of the lab she enjoys reading, endurance sports, and baking.

GSA Officers (Continued)



Sushrut Shah

Treasurer, (PhD)

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Sushrut Shah is currently a second-year PhD student in Integrative Physiology at Thomas Jefferson University. Sushrut grew up in India before moving to America. He earned BS in BioChemistry with a Computer Science minor from Temple University. He is currently focused on discovering the effects of novel small-molecule allosteric modulators targeting a family of GPCRs called β -adrenergic receptors as a potential treatment for cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases. He's a foodie who loves trying different restaurants, cuisines, and cooking. He also likes camping and hiking in various National Parks during his free time.



Ivette Martorell-Serra

VP of Academic Affairs, (PhD)

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Ivette Martorell Serra is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Neuroscience program at Jefferson. She grew up in a town near Barcelona, Spain, and did her undergraduate studies at the Autonomous University of Barcelona in Biomedical Sciences. She earned her master's degree in Medical Neurosciences at Charite-Universitatsmedizin Berlin (Germany). Ivette is currently in Dr. Davide Trotti's lab at the Weinberg ALS Center, researching neuroinflammation in C9orf72-linked ALS/FTD. Outside of science, she likes trying out new restaurants around the city, hiking, and traveling to Spain to visit her family and friends.



Bridget Boyle

VP of Internal Affairs, (PhD)

Bridget.Boyle@students.jefferson.edu

Bridget Boyle is a fourth-year Ph.D. student in the Neuroscience program at Jefferson. She grew up in Medford, New Jersey, and did her undergraduate studies at Rowan University in Translational Biomedical Science. She is currently in Dr. Elena Blanco-Suarez's lab researching ischemic stroke. Outside of science, she likes concerts, relaxing at the beach, and trying out new restaurants around the city.

GSA Officers (Continued)



Alanna Williams

VP Community and Cultural Affairs, (PhD)

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Hello! I am a 3rd year in the Neuroscience program here in JCLS. I was born and raised in New Orleans, Louisiana, and attended Xavier University of Louisiana where I received my bachelors is in Neuroscience, and then I received my Masters in Experimental Psychology from Nova Southeastern in Fort Lauderdale, FL! I am now a graduate student in the Ma lab and my project is focused on studying neuronal self-avoidance through receptor signaling in dendrites. Outside of the lab I love going out with friends and exploring the city! I love

going to new places and finding fun spots to hang out and new sights to see.



Joria Lee

Social Media Coordinator, (P4)

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Joria Le is a second-year P4 student at Jefferson. She was born in Texas but grew up in Oakton, Virginia. She graduated with a BSN from the University of Virginia and is currently completing a post-baccalaureate to attend medical school. She is currently a research coordinator for the Department of Gastroenterology and Hepatology helping to examine the use of Purastat as an effective hemostatic agent during surgery. Outside of academics, she likes running, hiking, and reading books.

GSA Officers (Continued)



Latese Evans

VP of Social Affairs, (PhD)

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Latese grew up in Prince William County, VA. She earned her BS in Biology from the Millersville University of Pennsylvania. Latese pursued a master's degree in Biomedical Sciences at Thomas Jefferson University. She decided to continue her master's research and is currently a first year PhD student in the GGCB program. She is studying urogenital malignancies in the Schiewer Lab. She loves to ride her bike around the city.



Libby Moese – 4th Year

VP of Career Development, (PhD)

Elizabeth.Moese@students.jefferson.edu

My name is Libby Moese and I'm a fourth-year PhD student in the Neuroscience program at Jefferson. I grew up in northern New Jersey, received my BA in Psychology from Miami University and then my MS in Biomedical Sciences here at Jefferson. I am currently in Le Ma's lab studying the role of microtubule associated proteins in axon branching and intracellular transport. Outside of the lab I love reading, cooking, and exploring the city.

PhD Student Liaisons

Biochemistry, Structural, & Molecular Biology Liaisons (BSMB)



Adi Caspi – 4th Year

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Adi is a fourth year PhD student in the Biochemistry and Molecular Pharmacology program. She grew up in Bucks County, PA, and attended Temple University for her BS in Biochemistry. Adi is currently working on her thesis in Dr. Scott Waldman's lab, where she's studying guanylyl cyclase signaling and gene regulation in colorectal cancer. Outside of lab, Adi loves to travel, write, watch the Phillies, and hang out with her cats.



Jenny Carey – 5th Year

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Jenny Carey is a fifth-year Ph.D. student in the Biochemistry, Structural and Molecular Biology PhD program. She is from Wallingford, PA and completed her B.S. in Biochemistry at Mount St. Mary's University. At Jefferson, Jenny is completing her thesis research in Dr. Lin Guo's lab, where she studies how short RNAs regulate protein phase separation. When Jenny is not in the lab, she enjoys baking, supporting Philly sports, and trying out new breweries with friends.

BSMB (continued)



Anthony Monte Carlo – 2nd Year

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Anthony Monte Carlo is a 2nd year Ph.D. student in the BSMB program. He grew up in West Deptford, NJ and attended Rutgers University - Camden as a part of their MARC program and majored in biology, which led him down his path toward attending Jefferson. His research mainly comprises of investigating different sequence and structural elements of DNA and how they might influence the cleavage of a specific nuclease that relates to repeat expansion disorders under the advisory of Anna Pluciennik, Ph.D. Outside of the lab, Anthony enjoys working on cars, playing video games, watching Philly sports, and spending time with his nephew!



Viktoriia Sokolova – 3rd Year

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I was born and raised in Ukraine, which I'm incredibly proud of. I came to US to earn my BS in Chemistry with a minor in Business Administration, and MS in Organic Chemistry from Drexel University. My Master's Thesis work focused on small molecule drug development targeting certain cancer-associated proteins. Currently, I am a second year PhD candidate in the Biochemistry and Molecular Pharmacology (BMP) program. I have joined Dr. Dmitry Temiakov's lab, where I'm focusing on structural and functional studies of proteins involved in mitochondrial DNA repair. In my free time, I enjoy

taking road trips and hiking outside of the city, as well as exploring new food and music spots in Philly.

Cell Biology & Regenerative Medicine (CBRM)



Alexandra Manchel – 5th Year

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Alex is a fifth year PhD candidate in the Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine (CBRM) program, working in the lab of Dr. Rajanikanth Vadigepalli. She studies the regenerative mechanisms of the liver using both computational and systems biology research approaches. She is originally from Voorhees, NJ and attended the University of Delaware, where she graduated with her BS in Quantitative Biology. Outside of lab, Alex enjoys exploring new restaurants in Philly and working out.



Connor Ott – 4th Year

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My name is Connor Ott and I am a fourth-year Ph.D. student in the Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine Program at Jefferson. In undergrad, I majored in Biochemistry at Villanova University. I am currently in Dr. Andrew Aplin's lab researching drug tolerance and targeted therapies in cutaneous melanoma. Outside of science, I enjoy playing soccer and going to happy hour.



Tanvi Abhang – 2nd Year

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Tanvi is a PhD student at Jefferson. She's from Mumbai, India. Tanvi's still narrowing down her final lab, but she's got this incredible passion for mechanistic biology. She's got a soft spot for immunobiology. It's not just a subject for her; it's her first step into the fascinating world of Regenerative Immunology. When she's not in the lab, you'll often find her relishing the simple joys of life. Taking leisurely walks, getting lost in captivating books, spending time with friends along the Schuylkill River, and indulging in moments of pure delight at Passero's cafe – that's her happy place. And here's the kicker – if you're a Potterhead, you've got to meet her. No need for a Marauder's Map; just ask around, and you'll find her. Together, you can explore the enchanting world of science, and who knows, maybe even share a Butterbeer or two along the way!

Genetics, Genomics, & Cancer Biology (GGCB)



Sarah Ahr – 2nd Year

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Sarah Ahr is a second-year Ph.D. student in the GGCB program at Jefferson. She is from North Carolina and completed her undergraduate degree at Wake Forest University in Biology. She's also received her Master's from King's College London. She is in Dr. Karen Bussard's lab researching the crosstalk between osteoclasts, osteoblasts, and cancer cells in bone metastatic breast and prostate cancer. In her free time, she likes running, seeing live music, and traveling.



Bernadette Tiberi-2nd year

Bernadette.Tiberi@students.jefferson.edu

Bern Tiberi is a second-year Ph.D. student in the Genetics, Genomics, & Cancer Biology program at Jefferson. She grew up in Haddon Township, New Jersey, and did her undergraduate studies at the University of New Haven in Forensic Science and Cell & Molecular Biology. She also worked as a research technician for a year at a bio-pharmaceutical company researching PROTACs for cancer therapies. She is currently in Dr. Sara Meyer's lab researching the role of epigenetic modifiers in hematopoiesis and potential hematopoietic malignancies. Outside of science, she likes reading, hanging out with friends and family, traveling, and going to concerts!

GGCB (Continued)



Ross Staudt – 4th Year

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Ross is from Marlton, NJ. He received his B.S. in Biology at Widener University and then went on to receive his M.S. in Biomedical Science here at Thomas Jefferson University. He is currently a fourth year Ph.D. student in the GGCB program. He is working in Dr. Adam Snook's lab where he is studying mechanisms to improve CAR T-cell therapy for treatment of solid tumors. Outside of school he enjoys golfing with friends and family, the painful experience of watching Philadelphia sports teams, and listening to Taylor Swift.



Justin Myers – 2nd year

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Justin Myers is from a small town in MA called Berlin. Justin received his Bachelor of Science in biology from Lafayette College in May 2019. Currently, Justin is a part of the GGCB cohort and works in the Alnemri lab studying inflammasome biology and its involvement in cancer. Outside of the lab Justin loves to bike, exercise, listen to music, play video games, draw, and read.

Immunology & Microbial Pathogenesis (IMP)



Samita Kafle – 4th Year

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Samita Kafle is a fourth-year Ph.D. student in the Immunology and Microbial Pathogenesis program at Jefferson. She moved to the States after finishing high school in Nepal and did her undergraduate at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania in Biochemistry. She also worked as a research technician in the Department of Hematology at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia after graduation. Currently, she studies the role of innate immune responses in the control of enterovirus pathogenesis in the lab of Dr. Luis Sigal using genetically modified mouse models. When she’s not in lab, she spends

her time reading novels, cooking, and hiking around the city.



Nathan Ryan- 4th Year

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I’m a 4th year PhD student in the IMP program. I grew up in Vienna, VA, got my BA in Biology at the University of Delaware and my MS in Immunology at Jefferson. I’m currently in David Abraham’s lab studying parasite immunology and vaccine development. We’re developing a vaccine against the parasitic nematode that causes river blindness, *Onchocerca volvulus*. Outside of work, I like to eat at Philly’s great restaurants and explore different neighborhoods and parks.



Gerald O’Connor- 4th Year

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Jerry O’Connor is a fourth-year PhD student in the Immunology and Microbial Pathogenesis program at Jefferson. He grew up in Devon, PA, and received his undergraduate degree from Saint Joseph’s University in Philadelphia, PA. He is currently in Sangwon Kim’s lab, investigating the GPR15-independent role of GPR15L in maintaining colon homeostasis in inflammatory bowel disease and colorectal cancer. When outside of the lab he likes hiking, running, trying new craft beers, and spending time with his dog.

Integrative Physiology (IP)



Dominic Villalba – 4th Year

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Dominic Villalba is a 4th year PhD student in the Integrative Physiology program at TJU. He grew up mostly in Doylestown, Pennsylvania and completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Delaware in biological sciences. He is currently in Dr. Raymond Penn's lab studying alternative drug targets in the context of airway obstructive disease and asthma. Outside of his research Dominic likes trying out new restaurants, hanging out at the beach, and wandering/hiking around.

Neuroscience (NS)



Libby Moese – 4th Year

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My name is Libby Moese and I'm a fourth-year PhD student in the Neuroscience program at Jefferson. I grew up in northern New Jersey, received my BA in Psychology from Miami University and then my MS in Biomedical Sciences here at Jefferson. I am currently in Le Ma's lab studying the role of microtubule associated proteins in axon branching and intracellular transport. Outside of the lab I love reading, cooking, and exploring the city.



Kallon Crowther – 3rd Year

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My name is Kallon Crowther and I am a third-year Ph.D. student in the Neuroscience program at TJU! I grew up just outside of Philadelphia in Southampton, PA. I completed my undergraduate degree at York College of Pennsylvania in Biology with two minors in Neuroscience and Psychology. I am a member of Dr. Rich Smeyne's lab where I study the relationship between the peripheral immune system and Parkinson's Disease. Outside of the lab I enjoy hiking, taking care of my houseplants and skiing!

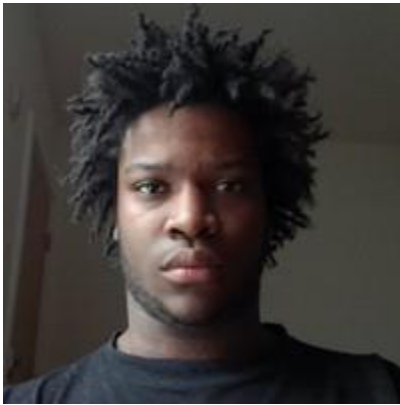
Neuroscience (continued)



Ivette Martorell-Serra – 3rd Year

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Ivette Martorell Serra is a third-year Ph.D. student in the Neuroscience program at Jefferson. She grew up in a town near Barcelona, Spain, and did her undergraduate studies at the Autonomous University of Barcelona in Biomedical Sciences. She earned her master's degree in Medical Neurosciences at Charite-Universitätsmedizin Berlin (Germany). Ivette is currently in Dr. Davide Trotti's lab at the Weinberg ALS Center, researching neuroinflammation in C9orf72-linked ALS/FTD. Outside of science, she likes trying out new restaurants around the city, hiking, and traveling to Spain to visit her family and friends.



Msema Msackyi – 4th Year

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I am a Neuroscience student, entering year 4. I am from Maryland. I have a Bachelor's degree in cell/molecular neuroscience and a Master's degree in biomedical science. I am currently in the lab of Drs. Chang-Gyu Hahn and Karin Borgmann-Winter, researching cellular and molecular pathology of schizophrenia. Outside of the lab, I practice Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, watch movies/online videos/ TV, and hang out with friends.



Bridget Boyle- 4th Year

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Bridget Boyle is a fourth-year Ph.D. student in the Neuroscience program at Jefferson. She grew up in Medford, New Jersey, and did her undergraduate studies at Rowan University in Translational Biomedical Science. She is currently in Dr. Elena Blanco-Suarez's lab researching ischemic stroke. Outside of science, she likes concerts, relaxing at the beach, and trying out new restaurants around the city.